STATEMENT OF BRIAN MULVANEY, A FAMILY MEMBER OF LYNSEY O'BRIEN, A FIFTEEN YEAR OLD GIRL WHO DIED WHILE ON A CRUISE

I am appearing before you today to tell you about a terrible tragedy which happened to a beautiful young girl, Lynsey O'Brien. I want to tell you about this tragedy and how it could have been avoided and urge you to consider passing a new law to prevent it form happening to any other family.

I am a childhood friend of Paul O'Brien. We grew up on the same block. The O'Brien children and my children have all been raised as family together. The O'Brien's traveled from Ireland to the United States to visit with us before we took off on a cruise from FT Lauderdale and returning to Ft Lauderdale, FI.

The O'Brien's brought four children on the vacation and cruise with them—they returned with only three children.

Lynsey O'Brien, a vibrant, 15 year old girl died as a result of a bartender on the Costa Cruise line ship Majica, serving her excessive amounts of alcohol (more then 10), knowing she was minor. This bartender served these drinks despite the bold statement in the Passenger Contract that no minor will be served alcohol under the age of Twenty One years old." There were signs all over the ship to the effect that alcohol will not be served to any person under 21 years of age. Despite those warnings and signs posted, Lynsey was served more then 10 drinks and died on January 4th as a direct result of this liquor. The alcohol affected her so much — she was so intoxicated that it was reported she was vomiting over the balcony and fell overboard.

If alcohol is served to a 15 year old in the United States, the bartender could be arrested and prosecuted as well the proprietors of the business and the liquor license would surely be revoked from the premises. Just because this action took place aboard a ship , should not insulate the bartender and the company from being held accountable for their criminal conduct.

The message must be delivered to the cruise lines that if they take passengers from a United States port, they are responsible to return them safely or be held accountable if they commit crimes or acts of gross negligence. I can't imagine a worse crime than plying a 15 year old girl with so much liquor she literally died as a direct result. What makes this utterly unbearable is that the cruise ships believe they have no accountability for their actions.

We encourage people from other countries to come to the United States and enjoy our country. We encourage people from other countries to spend money here. My childhood friend Paul O'Brien sought help from the .F.BI and was told that there is nothing they can do because Lynsey was not a US citizen. The United States needs to change its laws so that cruise ships coming and going from US ports such as this are held accountable to all people traveling on their ships.

Nothing can bring Lynsey back to us—but by changing the law perhaps we can save another family a lifetime of anguish without their loved one.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Mulvaney